

8 February 2007

Ms. Shahla Farahnak
State Water Resources Control Board
Division of Financial Assistance
1001 I Street, 16th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Ms. Tracie Billington
Department of Water Resources
Division of Planning and Local Assistance
P.O. Box 942836
Sacramento, CA 94236-0001

RE: Community Foundation of Santa Cruz – Northern Santa Cruz County IRWMP Project

To Ms. Farahnak and Ms. Billington:

In Spring of last year, our organization wrote to express support for the Northern Santa Cruz County Integrated Regional Water Management Project to integrate water supply, water quality and coastal resources projects in Northern Santa Cruz County. We were delighted to discover that the project received recommendation for funding from your organization.

Ecology Action supports this partner agency effort solely for the local environmental benefit such projects would manifest. We wish to be clear that Ecology Action is unlikely to partner with or subcontract to any of the proposed components or agencies in the proposal, so we do not anticipate financial benefit. We support the coordinated projects, and recommend your current proposal to increase the amount of funding currently recommended, because they will meet our community's current top goals to preserve and protect our natural environment.

The absolute number one environmental goal identified by Santa Cruz County residents is: *"Improving the health of rivers and oceans through reducing pollutants, reduction of sediment and increase of in-stream flows"*. This top ranked priority received over 422 votes from 1,000 participants in a community wide planning effort conducted in 2006. This goal was identified in the United Way Community Assessment Project for 2006.

We urge you to stay the course with your current recommendation and to fund the Northern Santa Cruz County IRWM for \$12.5 million. The proposal was already a shortened list of our most critically needed projects, as well as being a web of interconnected projects that lead to a larger solution. Funding this proposal will greatly assist our region in achieving our goals of adequately supporting our watersheds and to reach sustainability. If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact our lead staff for water quality programs, Kirsten Liske, at (831) 426-5925 extension 123.

Sincere Regards,



Virginia Johnson
Executive Director